HISTORICAL DIVING SOCIETY GERMANY

Broichbachtal 34, D-52134 Herzogenrath N W, Germany
Tel. 011-49-2406-929-330 Fax. 011-49-2406-929-331
www.historical-diving.de

Our German editor Michael Jung continues his research through the files of the Hans Hass Archives, and has located a 1946 hand-written letter from a member of G.E.R.S. to Hans Hass. The following text is as near as we can get to accurately deciphering the writing. The letter establishes early indirect contact between Cousteau and Hass only a few months after World War II ended. At this particular time Hass had published two books and produced two films and Cousteau had produced three films. Cousteau's first book was published the month after this letter, in May 1946, and Hass is mentioned in the text.

Our thanks to Michael for his continuing investigations in Europe that provide us such interesting material from this critical time in the development of self contained diving. Perhaps our friends at HDS France can tell us more about the author of the letter.- Leslie Leaney

Doctor BUGARD
Surgeon Lieutenant Commander
French Navy
Care of Capitaine de Maison-Rouge
French liaison officer
Residence Platz, Salzburg

Saturday April 27th, 1946
Groupe de Recherches ? ? du Fort
Toulon Var

Herr Hans Hass,

I am belonging to the French Navy, and my service is quite interested on your underwater films and pictures. We have already read your books "Photojagd am Meersgrund" and "Unter Hayen and Korallen." I have already met your friend Herr Von Wurzian who is actually in Hamburg and I have had a long meeting with him.

We intend to make films underwater next summer on the French Riviera and we are preparing a special mission to the Red Sea to take pictures of sharks and tropical sea animals.

We would be very interested if you could join us in France next summer. You may be have heard about the French diver Mr. Cousteau who has made two films under the sea, "Par dix-metres de fond" and "Epaves." I belong to his team and we offer to you an official proposition to come to France.

I am passing through Austria and I have heard about your actual residence in Zinkenbach, so I expected to meet you there. Herr Hubert will give you this letter if, unfortunately, I can't get in touch with you.

Will you kindly write to me about those two important points.

1st) Are you ready to spend one month in France next summer (June or July)? 2nd) How much do you intend about payment for one month.

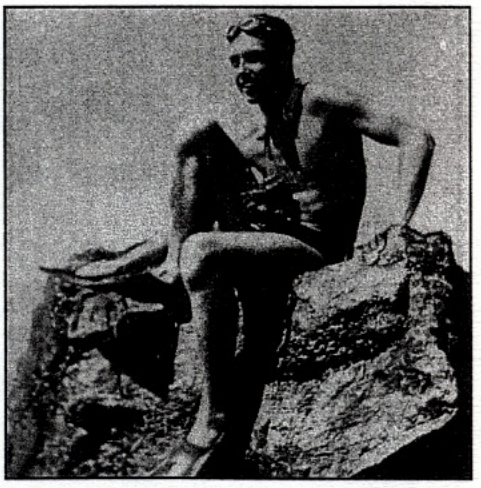
If this proposition has your agreement, you must go to the French Liason officer, Capitaine de Maison Rouge, Residence Platz in Salzburg and send a letter to me through him.

The best way to go to France is to ask a permit to Innsbruck (French Zone of Austria) through the French Liason Officer in Salzburg. Then in Innsbruck ask a permit to France through the French Naval mission.

You must write to me first. The Capitaine de Maison Rouge will send me your letter.

I am going back to France tomorrow and I will do the necessary about your permit. You can meet me in Salzburg at the Transit Hotel "Gahler-Brau" until Sunday night.

Hoping to have good news from you,
Sincerely yours,
Dr. Bugard



Hass in a photo from a 1942 copy of Fotojagd am Meeresgrund.

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In the last issue of *Historical Diver* (Vol. 11, Issue 1, No. 34) we published the complete text of an April 27, 1946 letter from Doctor Bugard of G.E.R.S. to Hans Hass. We omitted to mention that it was written in English and did not require translation, just a little deciphering. Michael Jung continues to uncover historical treasurers from the Hans Hass archive, and in this issue we are happy to publish the reply to Dr. Bugard from Hans Hass, which was typed in English.

At this time in history Hass had already completed three self-funded diving expeditions: free diving expedition to the coast of Yugoslavia in 1938, a free diving expedition to Curacao and Bonaire in 1939, and, in 1942, his first scuba expedition to the Aegean Sea using the modified Drager Gegenlunge O_2 rebreather. Cousteau had been on a 1939 free diving expedition to Djerba Island off Tunisia.

Hass' reply, as written below, sets the stage for a meeting with Cousteau and G.E.R.S. in July 1947, on the French Mediterranean coast. - *Leslie Leaney*

Zweigstelle Wolfgangsee
Zinkenbach 79 bei St. Gilgen
Salzburg, Osterreich

April 28 th, 1946

to Dr. Bugard
surgeon lieutenant commander
of the French Navy

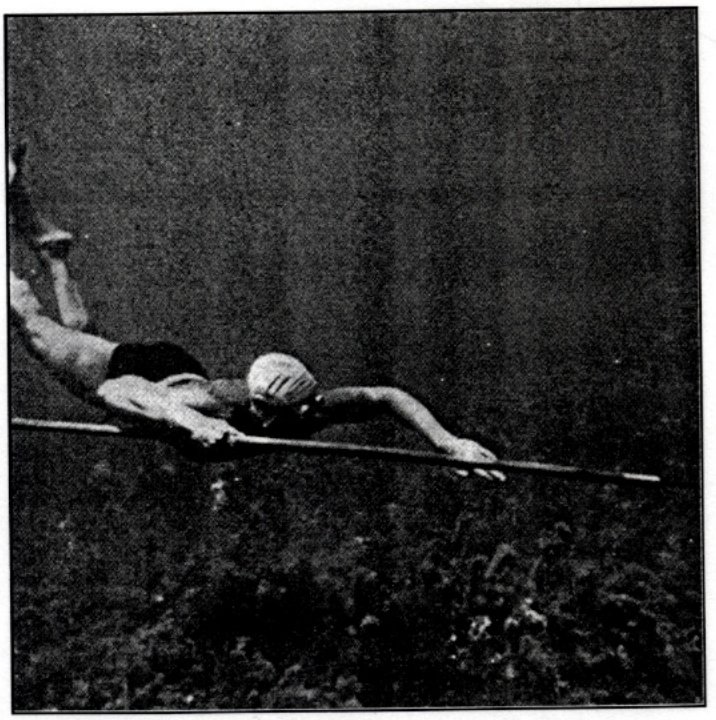
Dear Dr. Bugard,

In reference to your visit and to your letter I want to tell you that I shall be glad to accept your invitation. I don't know yet whether I shall be able to stay an entire month, but I will try to arrange it. A special fee will not be necessary because I wanted to meet Mr. Cousteau myself and moreover this invitation will give me the opportunity to continue my own studies and to see again those beloved coasts where I dove and hunted for the first time. There will therefore only be the costs of my sojourn, and apart from that I naturally will need a certain sum for my private mobility. As I do not know what prices are like in France at present, I leave this matter to your consideration.

You offered me that one of you would come to meet me at Innsbruck and I would greatly appreciate this indeed. We could meet on the second of July and take the Arlberg-Express on the third.

I shall be glad to meet all of you and to offer you our experiences; I am sure that our meeting will be of mutual interest.

Yours sincerely



A Hans Hass photo from the 1938 expedition

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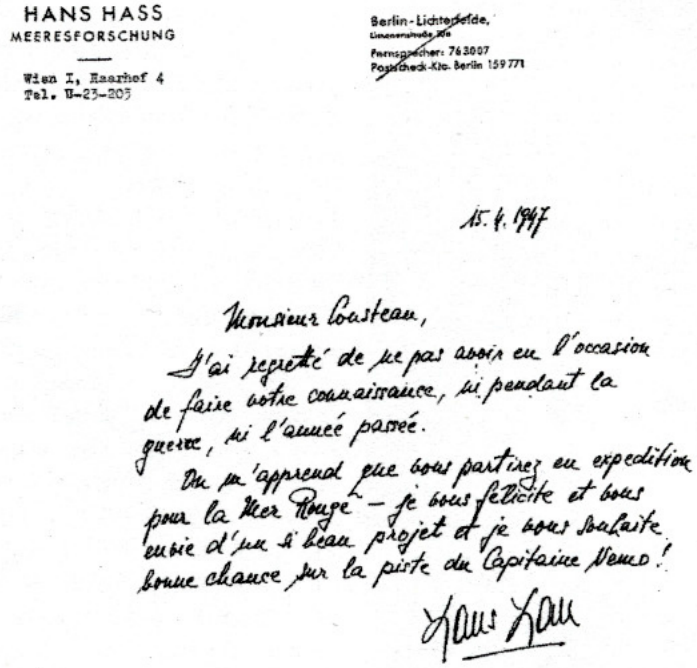
In issue 34 we published the text of a 1946 letter from Dr. Bugard to Hans Hass. Bugard was a member of the then newly-formed G.E.R.S., which had Tailliez as its Commanding Officer and J.-Y. Cousteau as his deputy. In issue 35 we published Hans Hass' reply, dated April 28, 1946. In that letter Hass agrees to accept the G.E.R.S. invitation to join them for an underwater filming project on the French Riviera in July of 1947. The stage was thus set for an historic meeting between the world's two foremost scuba diving film-makers, Hass and Cousteau, with the obvious possibility that they might work together.

Michael Jung has recently located an April, 1947, letter written in French from Hass to Cousteau. It seems to indicate that the meeting would probably not take place as Cousteau was going on expedition to the Red Sea. A scanned version of this letter is reproduced below, with a translation in English that follows. If Michael is able to find any details of exactly what happened we will publish them in a future issue.

As far as I can research, Cousteau did not make that 1947 Red Sea expedition. In 1947 G.E.R.S was busy refitting its vessel, L'INGENIEUR ELIE MONNIER, which they used the next year, 1948, on expeditions to Tunisia and Dakar. Hass was the first to dive the Red Sea. He did so on a self-funded expedition in 1949, and recorded his advenures there in his book *Manta*. Cousteau finally got to the Red Sea aboard CALYPSO in late 1951, and his adventures were published in America in the October 1952 edition of *National Geographic Magazine*.

—Leslie Leaney



HANS HASS
MEERESFORSCHUNG

Wien I, Haarhof 4
Tel. U-23-203

Berlin-Lichterfelde,
Fernsprecher: 763007
Postscheck-Kto. Berlin 159771

15. 4. 1947

Monsieur Cousteau,

J'ai regretté de ne pas avoir eu l'occasion de faire votre connaissance, ni pendant la guerre, ni l'année passée.

On m'apprend que vous partirez en expedition pour la Mer Rouge – je vous félicite et vous envie d'un si beau projet et je vous souhaite bonne chance sur la piste du Capitaine Nemo!

Hans Hass

Hans Hass
Meeresforschung
Wein 1, Haarhof 4
Tel. U-23-203

15.4.1947

Mr. Cousteau,

I regretted not having the occasion to meet you, not during the war, nor the past year.

It has come to my knowledge that you are leaving on an expedition to the Red Sea - I congratulate you and envy you on such a beautiful project, I wish you good luck on the trail of Captain Nemo!

Hans Hass